

**The Global Effort to Reduce Child Hunger  
and  
Increase School Attendance**



**McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and  
Child Nutrition Program**

**Report to the United States Congress**

**Fiscal Year 2015**

*Cover: School girls in Laos enjoy their midday meal prepared with U.S.-donated milled rice and vitamin A fortified vegetable oil, supplemented by local vegetables. Photo courtesy of USDA McGovern-Dole staff.*

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## List of Acronyms

CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CBCC	Community-Based Childhood Centers
EGR	Early Grade Reading
EU	European Union
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
FFE	Food for Education
FBF	Fortified Blended Foods
FSA	Farm Service Agency
FY	Fiscal Year
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
HEB	High-Energy Biscuit
GON	Government of Nepal
KSU	Kansas State University
LRP	Local and Regional Procurement Program
MFFAPP	Micronutrient-Fortified Food Aid Products Pilot
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Metric Tons
NASO	Nascent Solutions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAI	Planet Aid International
PCI	Project Concern International
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
ROM	Results Oriented Management
RUSF	Ready-to-Eat Supplementary Food
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Program
World Vision	World Vision International

## PREFACE

The governing legislation of the McGovern–Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (McGovern-Dole), stated in Section 3107(1)(2) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 17360–1(1)(2)), amended and reauthorized in The Agricultural Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-79, Feb 7, 2014), outlines the requirement for the “procurement of agricultural commodities and the provision of financial and technical assistance to carry out—

- (1) preschool and school food for education programs in foreign countries to improve food security, reduce the incidence of hunger, and improve literacy and primary education, particularly with respect to girls; and
- (2) maternal, infant, and child nutrition programs for pregnant women, nursing mothers, infants, and children who are 5 years of age or younger.”

The legislation also states that the Secretary of Agriculture “shall annually submit to the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report on the commitments and activities of governments including the United States government, in the global effort to reduce child hunger and increase school attendance.”

This report describes activities undertaken and funds committed in this global effort through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015. The United States Department of Agriculture’s Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) administers the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. This report is the Secretary’s submission for FY 2015.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### *Overview of School Meals Programs Globally*

The school meals modality is used in some cases as a social safety net that simultaneously addresses hunger, nutrition, health, education, school attendance, and literacy. According to the 2016 Humanitarian Requirements Document, school meals “incentivize families in need to send their children to school, while improving the overall nutritional situation.”<sup>1</sup> Despite the breadth and depth of a school meals program, no international school meals stakeholder is routinely and consistently compiling data on what all major donors and national governments are doing in school meals and education at the global level. Major donors such as the World Bank still mostly do not track their school meals or education programs in a way that enables stakeholders to know how much has been invested in school meals programs or on their effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, including their cost per student. Increased support for global school meals programs by major donors other than USDA began in the wake of the 2007-2008 food price crisis and the subsequent 2009 global financial collapse. Adding further challenge to the task of understanding just how much investments are and where they are taking place, these activities are still often carried out under the larger rubric of social protection or are commonly funded as part of larger programs and categorized under headings, such as community development and others. Even education projects with school meals components may not be categorized as school meals. Common codes and definitions to track these investments are lacking.

Due to its mandate within the United Nations as the international organization lead on school meals, and by far the largest recipient of funding for that purpose, the World Food Programme (WFP) tracks which donors contribute to their school meals programs and where they invest these funds. Absent a commonly-agreed-to tracking mechanism managed by a single global point of contact, these figures can serve as a proxy for global tracking because of the sheer size of WFP’s school meals portfolio. The latest publically available WFP statistics are from 2015.

In 2015 the U.S. Government was, as in previous years, the largest WFP school meals donor worldwide on a nominal basis, providing \$85 million, via the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (McGovern-Dole). This amount is nearly as much as the rest of WFP’s school meals donors combined and was followed by Canada at \$37 million, the global private sector at \$30 million, and the Russian Federation at \$12 million. The United States spent over \$1 billion on education via Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2015, making the McGovern-Dole contribution 6.7 percent of total ODA education expenditures.<sup>2</sup> Canada spent around \$292 million on education via ODA, making its contribution to WFP on school meals nearly 13 percent of its education budget. Private sector contributions are not considered ODA, and the Russian Federation’s information is not available in the Overseas Economic Development Cooperation data sets.

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations and Government of Ethiopia, “Humanitarian Requirements Document (2016),” <http://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/periodic-monitoring-report-2016-humanitarian-requirements-document-ethiopia-1>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/data/oecd-international-development-statistics/official-bilateral-commitments-by-sector\\_data-00073-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/data/oecd-international-development-statistics/official-bilateral-commitments-by-sector_data-00073-en)

In addition to WFP's 2015 data, WFP and the World Bank published two foundational documents on school meals that sparked major donor and national government interest, and dramatic increases in financial and technical support around the world. The first, "Rethinking School Feeding: Social Safety Nets, Child Development, and the Education Sector," reflects emergent thinking in the midst of the 2009 global financial crisis on how school meals could feature within social protection programs to sustainably support national governments' food security strategies.<sup>3</sup> This document compiled the evidence base for the effectiveness of school meals as a productive social safety net, and advocated for increased and continued support to school feeding as a long-term investment in human capital.

The second WFP document, published in 2013, was the "State of School Feeding Worldwide," which compiled evidence on the effectiveness of school feeding for social protection, reducing hunger, and supporting food security for the poorest households.<sup>4</sup> This report presented analyses, findings and recommendations from a WFP school feeding survey in 169 countries, mapping where the major investments were, including in the richest countries, as well as where the greatest needs and gaps in support were. The report analyzed the factors that affected impact and made recommendations for how to address them. It also highlighted how few studies and impact evaluations of school meals programs existed and the need for more research on and evaluations of school meals programs.

Through their updated analyses, WFP and the World Bank provided further evidence that school meals could effectively support larger social protection programs, build on and solidify gains made in nutrition programs for infants and younger children, and help countries respond to and become more resilient to shocks such as those in 2007-2009. Significantly, the analyses also supported the benefit of linking school meals programs to the agriculture sector, which is something that McGovern-Dole actively supports. These studies did not address cost-effectiveness or prioritize school feeding within the spectrum of programs to address critical humanitarian or educational objectives.

### *Global Nutrition: Critical Gap for School Age Children*

USDA directly targets the nutrition of school-age children through McGovern-Dole. The current trend of global nutrition is focused primarily and predominantly on children under two years of age, and pregnant and lactating women, during a time referred to as the first "1000 days." During this time period when the most rapid and important cognitive and physical development takes place, malnutrition can cause irreversible damage to children's cognitive development and destine them to be at risk of poor health across their entire lifespan.

Meanwhile, data on the nutritional status of school age children is nearly lacking worldwide. This age group is missing from the larger U.S. Government global nutrition reporting procedures and also from global surveys and nutrition reports. While some developing countries have

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<sup>3</sup> <https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/978-0-8213-7974-5>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.wfp.org/content/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2013>

occasional surveys on this age range, they are seldom repeated and never routinely administered. Even the majority of high income countries lack data on the nutritional status of their own school age children.

Most surveys and nutrition programs worldwide tend to concentrate on other age ranges, so implementers and policy makers tend to have no way to know for certain what the major nutrition trends are among this demographic. School meal implementers are generally left to extrapolate from data on children under five and estimate that the problems plaguing children aged 3-5 probably also affect school age children. Other problems, however, such as obesity, complicate the data, leaving implementers and policy makers without solid data to make programmatic decisions.

### *USDA and School Meals*

McGovern-Dole, originally authorized in 2002 and named after Senators Robert Dole and George McGovern, donates U.S. agricultural commodities and provides technical assistance to ensure that children in the poorest, most food insecure nations have adequate, safe, and nutritious food to be better able to learn in school. Since its authorization in 2002, McGovern-Dole has benefited more than 30 million vulnerable infants, children, mothers, and families.

In 2015, USDA purchased 64,000 metric tons (MT) of U.S. agricultural commodities, including 41,870 MT of rice, 22,160 MT of fortified blended foods, and 5,140 MT of vegetable oil, valued over \$36 million, for McGovern-Dole. These commodities were used to feed food insecure school children directly and boost their mothers' and younger siblings' nutrition through take home rations. These purchases from U.S. domestic farmers directly complement the work being carried out by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) to link U.S. agriculture to the world by enhancing export opportunities and global food security.

While the situation and circumstances in advanced economies differ substantially from the poorest countries, evidence from USDA's domestic National School Lunch Program (NSLP) demonstrates that providing a free or reduced-price meal at school has led to real, tangible improvements in food security for U.S. children. The positive impact of NSLP is even more pronounced for children in low-income households, and is a vital component of the United States' social safety net.<sup>5</sup> USDA has been the provider of school meals and food assistance programs to low-income families in the United States for over seven decades. USDA's international experience includes procuring safe and nutritious U.S. commodities, helping countries set national policies, training school administrators in how to prepare nutritious and safe food, setting nutritional and food safety standards for school children, reaching low-income and food insecure indigenous communities, and supporting Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs).

According to its authorizing legislation, McGovern-Dole targets primary school children (as defined by the recipient country), and supports maternal and child health and nutrition, including

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<sup>5</sup> Gunderson, C., et al., "The Impact of the National School Lunch Program on Child Health: A Non Parametric Bounds Analysis," in *Journal of Econometrics* (2011), 166(1), p. 79-91.



for preschoolers before they enter primary school. During FY 2015, McGovern-Dole provided \$240.79 million to new projects and was active in a total of 27 countries, and reached nearly 4,570,000 school-aged children and their families, including continuing projects from prior years. Due to its authorizing legislation, McGovern-Dole targets girls, who face unique socio-political barriers—such as early marriage, gender inequities, violence, and a heavy burden of household chores—that impede their school attendance. McGovern-Dole aims to break the cycle of poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and lack of education by providing schoolchildren with access to safe, nutritious meals in school regardless of gender, nationality, or ethnicity.

The ultimate goal for McGovern-Dole is graduation from outside funding. Broad consensus exists among policymakers that there is no “one size fits all” path for a country to achieve a sustainable school meals program. Different school meals approaches are best suited to different, unique country contexts.<sup>6</sup> Even so, policymakers do agree that to attain a sustainable nationally-owned school meals program, coordinated action and commitment is necessary among all stakeholders, including students, teachers, principals, parents, and community members.<sup>7</sup> Sustainable national school meals programs may be strengthened by coordinated actions among key parties on food and nutrition education, such as using school gardens as an educational tool, and conforming to local diets when developing an appropriate school lunch menu.<sup>8</sup>

To obtain stronger empirical evidence on the efficacy and efficiency of McGovern-Dole, during FY 2015, USDA convened two fora of subject matter experts, researchers, and stakeholders. The purpose of the fora was to identify research and evidence gaps in the three foci of the McGovern-Dole legislation: literacy (especially for girls), nutrition, and dietary practices. By combining subject matter expert input with systematic literature reviews, USDA developed a learning agenda. This learning agenda poses a set of strategic questions that will inform McGovern-Dole’s evaluation and research priorities for the years to come, and will also complement the global research agenda.

## I. Program Overview: Basic Operations

Since the program’s authorization in 2002, McGovern-Dole has benefited more than 30 million food insecure infants, children, mothers, and families, and has contributed to the broader U.S. Government effort to alleviate global poverty, malnutrition, and illiteracy. McGovern-Dole projects are implemented by non-profit organizations, cooperatives, WFP and other international organizations. USDA announces a list of McGovern-Dole priority countries each year based on

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<sup>6</sup> Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, “Program of Brazil-FAO Cooperation,” 2015 <http://www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/projects/school-feeding/sustainable-schools/en/>, hereafter referred to as FAO, “Program of Brazil-FAO Cooperation,” 2015;

The World Bank, “No ‘One Size Fits All’ Solution to Sustainable School Feeding Programs,” June 9, 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2016/06/09/no-one-size-fits-all-solution-to-sustainable-school-feeding-programs>, hereafter referred to as The World Bank, “No ‘One Size Fits All,’” June 9, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> FAO, “Program of Brazil-FAO Cooperation,” 2015; The World Bank, “No ‘One Size Fits All,’” June 9, 2016.

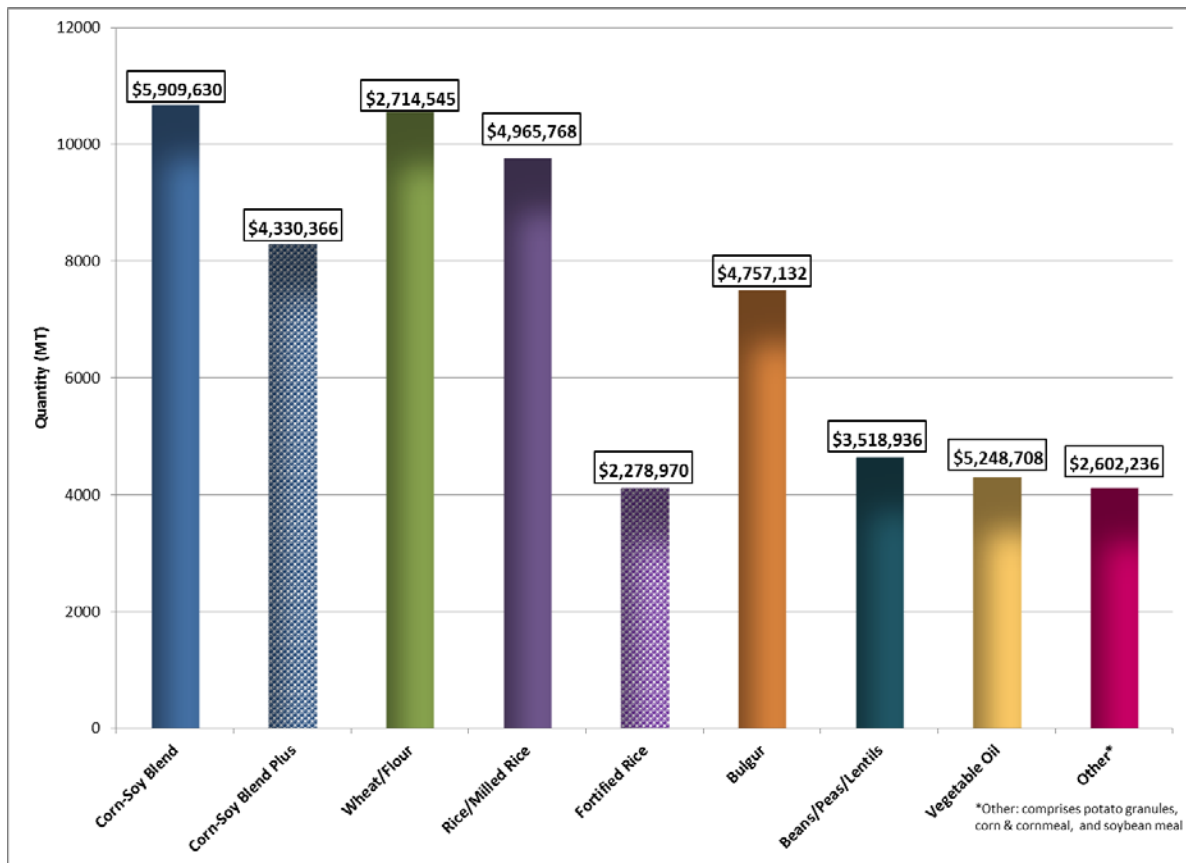
<sup>8</sup> FAO, “Program of Brazil-FAO Cooperation,” 2015.

criteria such as per-capita income, literacy, and malnutrition rates. Proposal review and selection criteria are outlined in detail in Appendix V.

*How Does USDA Provide the Commodities to the Schoolchildren?*

McGovern-Dole purchases U.S.-sourced commodities on the commercial market in a transparent solicitation process, using the same system that USDA uses for its NSLP. The final award is made to the lowest combined commodity and freight bid, while taking into account U.S. cargo preference and the port selection. After USDA announces the award, the commodity supplier has about eight weeks to ensure commodities arrive at the designated U.S. load port. Once at the discharge port, the commodities are discharged into a designated warehouse at port.

**Figure 1: Total U.S. Commodities purchased in 2015 (Total \$36.3 million)**



### *How Are the Commodities Chosen?*

USDA consults with technical staff in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to develop a list of eligible commodities for food assistance. At present, over 53 commodities are available for use. Implementing partners must demonstrate through the solicitation process why they are choosing certain commodities from the eligible commodity list for the targeted communities and justify the appropriateness of nutritional content and ration size for the children.

### *How Does McGovern-Dole Ensure that the Food the Children Receive is Safe to Eat?*

In addition to selecting the commodities to be used in their direct feeding programs, McGovern-Dole implementing partners must also demonstrate that they have the organizational capacity and expertise to manage, in a safe and effective manner, the internal transportation and shipping and handling (ITSH) of the donated commodities. The implementing partners must also ensure that the local school communities (e.g., teachers, parents, and local leaders) store the commodities in a designated location, at each school or community, which keeps the food safe to eat and secure from theft.

Implementing partners must also demonstrate organizational capacity and staff to monitor the correct use of U.S. commodities in school. Each implementing partner must have a set of field-staff who regularly visit McGovern-Dole designated schools to ensure that the school meals are being served regularly, using the correct rations, and the school community members and cooks meet the requirements for the safe storage and correct use of commodities. Further, implementers must also provide regular assessment of and trainings for officials and other members of the host government's school feeding unit to prepare them for the transition of McGovern-Dole schools to the national government.

### **Breakdown of Costs**

McGovern-Dole provides both U.S.-sourced commodities and financial and technical assistance to support the food, nutrition, and literacy needs of food-insecure schoolchildren to help them lead healthy and productive lives. The financial assistance can cover anything that relates to school meals, including shipping and storing the food, training cooks, buying supplies, and building schools to purchasing supplies. Activities covered under financial assistance vary among agreements, but all complement the school meals commodities and contribute to the objectives of the specific McGovern-Dole project and capacity building for sustainability.

**Figure 2: McGovern-Dole Commodities and Funding Allocations FY 2015**

Country	Commodity	Metric Tons (MT)	Commodity Cost	Freight	Financial Assistance <sup>1</sup>	Total Agreement Value over Life of Project
<b>Africa</b>						
Cameroon	Milled Rice	1,260	\$1,218,000	\$441,000	--	--
	Pinto Beans	450	\$440,871	\$157,500	--	--
	Vegetable pail – 20 L, oil	200	\$400,002	\$70,000	--	--
<b>Cameroon Total</b>		<b>1,910</b>	<b>\$2,058,873</b>	<b>\$668,500</b>	<b>\$9,272,627</b>	<b>\$12,000,000</b>
Cote d'Ivoire	Fortified Rice	18,750	\$9,376,057	\$709,020	--	--
	Vegetable substitutable, oil	900	\$450,051	\$236,270	--	--
	Yellow split peas	2,700	\$1,350,152	\$4,923,750	--	--
<b>Cote d'Ivoire Total</b>		<b>22,350</b>	<b>\$11,176,260</b>	<b>\$5,869,040</b>	<b>\$14,133,200</b>	<b>\$31,178,500</b>
Guinea-Bissau	Milled Rice	9,894	\$4,946,030	\$3,707,463	--	--
	Pinto Beans	1,957	\$1,320,890	\$733,324	--	--
	Vegetable oil, 6/4 L	732	\$878,400	\$274,294	--	--
<b>Guinea-Bissau Total</b>		<b>12,583</b>	<b>\$7,145,320</b>	<b>\$4,715,080</b>	<b>\$8,139,600</b>	<b>\$20,000,000</b>
Mali	Fortified Rice	6,440	\$3,716,150	\$2,997,534	--	--
	Green Split Peas	610	\$473,338	\$283,928	--	--
	Lentils	870	\$1,044,440	\$404,946	--	--
	Vegetable substitutable, oil	920	\$1,104,000	\$428,219	--	--
<b>Mali Total</b>		<b>8,840</b>	<b>\$6,337,928</b>	<b>\$4,114,628</b>	<b>\$19,447,444</b>	<b>\$29,900,000</b>
Mozambique	Corn Soy Blend Plus	4,810	\$3,057,876	\$1,611,350	--	--
<b>Mozambique (PAI) Total</b>		<b>4,810</b>	<b>\$3,057,876</b>	<b>\$1,611,350</b>	<b>\$27,130,774</b>	<b>\$31,800,000</b>
Mozambique	Corn Soy Blend Plus	7,950	\$4,379,116	\$2,033,865	--	--
<b>Mozambique (World Vision) Total</b>		<b>7,950</b>	<b>\$4,379,116</b>	<b>\$2,033,865</b>	<b>\$22,587,019</b>	<b>\$29,000,000</b>
Rwanda	Corn Soy Blend Plus	4,655	\$2,932,650	\$1,396,500	--	--
	Vegetable oil	540	\$604,800	\$162,000	--	--
<b>Rwanda Total</b>		<b>5,195</b>	<b>\$3,537,450</b>	<b>\$1,558,500</b>	<b>\$19,904,050</b>	<b>\$25,000,000</b>
Sierra Leone	Fortified Rice	2,820	\$1,593,300	\$1,128,000	--	--
	Lentils	430	\$371,101	\$172,000	--	--
	Veg oil	150	\$168,070	\$60,000	--	--
<b>Sierra Leone Total</b>		<b>3,400</b>	<b>\$2,132,471</b>	<b>\$1,360,000</b>	<b>\$14,707,529</b>	<b>\$18,200,000</b>
<b>Africa Total</b>		<b>67,038</b>	<b>\$39,825,294</b>	<b>\$21,930,963</b>	<b>\$135,322,243</b>	<b>\$197,078,500</b>
<b>Caribbean</b>						
Haiti	Bulgur	3,600	\$1,224,000	\$904,284	--	--
	Green Whole	940	\$634,500	\$236,119	--	--

Country	Commodity	Metric Tons (MT)	Commodity Cost	Freight	Financial Assistance <sup>1</sup>	Total Agreement Value over Life of Project
	Peas					
	Roasted Peanuts	1,180	-- <sup>9</sup>	\$296,404	--	--
	Veg oil, 6/4 L	330	\$369,600	\$82,893	--	--
	<b>Haiti Total</b>	<b>6,050</b>	<b>\$2,228,100</b>	<b>\$1,519,700</b>	<b>\$6,252,200</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>
	<b>Caribbean Total</b>	<b>6,050</b>	<b>\$2,228,100</b>	<b>\$1,519,700</b>	<b>\$6,252,200</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>
<b>Central America</b>						
Honduras	Corn Soy Blend	3,020	\$1,812,000	\$1,152,641	--	--
	Corn Soy Blend Plus	2,000	\$1,260,000	\$763,338	--	--
	Milled Rice	2,700	\$1,296,270	\$1,030,506	--	--
	Small Red Beans	1,800	\$2,098,982	\$687,004	--	--
	Vegetable substitutable, oil	1,360	\$1,557,080	\$519,070	--	--
	Yellow Corn	2,500	\$661,500	\$954,173	--	--
	<b>Honduras Total</b>	<b>13,380</b>	<b>\$8,685,832</b>	<b>\$5,106,732</b>	<b>\$19,907,436</b>	<b>33,700,000</b>
	<b>Central America TOTAL</b>	<b>13,380</b>	<b>\$8,685,832</b>	<b>\$5,106,732</b>	<b>\$19,907,436</b>	<b>\$33,700,000</b>
	<b>WORLDWIDE TOTAL</b>	<b>86,468</b>	<b>\$50,739,226</b>	<b>\$28,557,395</b>	<b>\$161,481,879</b>	<b>\$240,778,500</b>

## Legislative Mandates on Food Security, Sustainability, and Increased School Attendance

As directed by Section 3107 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, FAS must “carry out preschool and school food for education programs in foreign countries to improve food security, reduce the incidence of hunger, and improve literacy and primary education, particularly with respect to girls”<sup>10</sup> and agreements with eligible organizations for the implementation of multi-year projects “shall include provisions to sustain the benefits to the education, enrollment, and attendance of children in schools in the targeted communities.”<sup>11</sup>

### A. Promoting Graduation to Sustainable, Nationally-Owned School Meals Program

McGovern-Dole has made significant strides in ensuring that host countries take over the provision of school meals and all associated activities that promote education, literacy, and nutrition. Many countries have adopted school meals programs as a social safety net to achieve education, nutrition, agricultural, and economic development goals including food security. Strong school meals policies are a prerequisite for effective, sustainable, and government-owned school meals programs.<sup>12,13</sup> When host governments pass and implement school meals policies,

<sup>9</sup> The 1,180 MT of peanuts for the FY 2015 McGovern-Dole Haiti WFP program do not have a commodity cost associated as these peanuts were donated to USDA as a result of the peanut production surplus in the United States in 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, Public Law 107-171, 116 Stat. 295, May 13, 2002, Sec. B.1. (2002)

<sup>11</sup> Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, Public Law 107-171, 116 Stat. 295, May 13, 2002, Sec. J.1.A. (2002)

<sup>12</sup> FAO, “Program of Brazil-FAO Cooperation,” 2015.

they create a foundation for successful collaboration across the multiple government agencies and institutions that have a stake in school meals, including in the agriculture, education, health, and even finance and rural development sectors.

McGovern-Dole projects take on a top-down and bottom-up approach to achieving sustainability. The program targets the “top,” pressing national governments to develop and implement long-term strategies, policies, and regulatory frameworks for a national school meals program. Simultaneously, McGovern-Dole involves the “bottom,” or local communities, to help parents and families invest time or effort in the school meals program. McGovern-Dole projects engage community members through a variety of trainings, including school staff in administration and pedagogy, PTAs in information sessions, and local farmers’ cooperatives in commodity management. These various stakeholders provide hands-on help with kitchen operations, supervise feeding activities, and, as appropriate, the operation of school gardens. The local communities also help to grow or procure supplemental foods from the local region for usage in meal preparation to increase dietary diversity.

McGovern-Dole also tracks contributions that local, regional, and national governments offer to the school meals program, whether in cash or in-kind form.

## B. McGovern-Dole and All Other Donors FY 2015

<b>Region/ Country</b>	<b>Country Program Description</b>	<b>Confirmed Contributions to 2015 Country Program (US dollars, millions)<sup>14</sup></b>	<b>USDA McGovern- Dole Contribution (US dollars, millions)<sup>15</sup></b>
Cote d'Ivoire	In Cote d'Ivoire, WFP implemented a school feeding project in regions with the worst combined scores of gross enrollment and pass rates, food insecurity levels, and chronic malnutrition prevalence - Cavally, Bafing (West), Bagoue, Poro, and Tchologo (North); Gontougo and Bounkani (North-east). WFP's objectives were to increase enrollment and retention rates, particularly among girls, and to build the capacity of the government counterpart to fully implement a sustainable school feeding program.	\$18.7	\$31.1

<sup>13</sup> The World Bank, “No ‘One Size Fits All,’” June 9, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> Data from confirmed contributions as published in the World Food Programme, “Standard Project Report (2015),” categorized by country, <http://www.wfp.org/government-donors/standard-project-reports>. Data excludes U.S. contribution.

<sup>15</sup> Amounts denote the full USDA commitment level of the multi-year grants awarded in FY 2015.

<b>Region/ Country</b>	<b>Country Program Description</b>	<b>Confirmed Contributions to 2015 Country Program (US dollars, millions)<sup>14</sup></b>	<b>USDA McGovern- Dole Contribution (US dollars, millions)<sup>15</sup></b>
Guinea Bissau	WFP school feeding activities were implemented in regions where school enrollment was below 60 percent. Food assistance was used to retain children at school and stabilize attendance rates, particularly at the end of the cashew nut season when parents tend to take children out of school to help with the harvest. WFP provided 4-6 grade girls with take-home rations as an extra incentive to improve their retention in schools.	\$28	\$20
Rwanda	WFP aimed to support the Government of Rwanda in designing, implementing, and managing its own food assistance programs to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition. In 2015, WFP provided technical expertise to the government to develop national capacity in the areas of vulnerability analysis, disaster risk reduction and management, and market access for smallholder farmers through the Purchase for Progress (P4P) initiative, as well as in home-grown school feeding. WFP provided daily lunches to primary school children at targeted schools in two of the country's poorest and most food insecure districts, Nyamagabe and Nyaruguru. The food basket provided consisted of maize meal, beans, fortified vegetable oil, and iodized salt. As a contribution to the school feeding program, all schools provided locally-grown vegetables to enrich the meals provided by WFP. In line with consultations with the Ministry of Education, WFP's focus shifted from direct school feeding in a large number of schools to a pilot phase for a nationally-owned home-grown school feeding program. The program's coverage was reduced to 24 schools and, as a result, the number of school children assisted and the quantity of food distributed were lower than planned.	\$21.5	\$25.0
Haiti	The WFP school meals program represents Haiti's largest food safety net. It also supports government efforts to establish a Haitian-owned program by 2030. With trust fund resources, WFP launched a home-grown school feeding pilot in the Nippes department to augment production among smallholder farmers while supplying schools with local food.	\$78	\$10

*Spotlight on Bangladesh: WFP hands over project to the National Government*

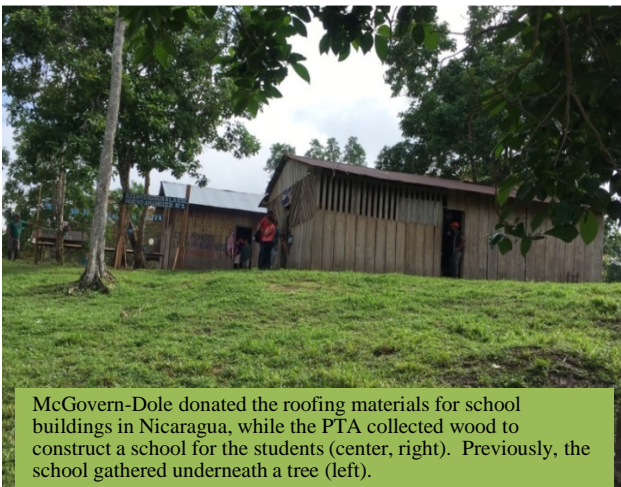


A Bangladeshi factory worker monitors the production of biscuits made from donated U.S. Wheat. Photo courtesy of U.S. Embassy New Delhi.

USDA provided WFP \$26 million in FY 2014 to implement a three-year McGovern-Dole project in Bangladesh. Under this agreement, the U.S. Government provided 29,000 metric tons of soft white wheat to WFP for an open bid process among local food processing plants. WFP then selected the most competitive bid, and the plant whose bid was selected produced fortified high energy biscuits (HEBs). In FY 2015, WFP provided over 10,480,000 mid-morning snacks in four sub-districts.

WFP's efforts to collaborate with the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) to design and operationalize a national school meals program have been equally important, leading to a successful 2015 handover of two sub-districts to the GOB to continue school meals operations in 455 schools that WFP previously supported under a McGovern-Dole project.

In 2011, the GOB established a national school meals policy that set the stage for a full-fledged national school meals program that will help school children in areas with high poverty and low primary-school completion rates to attend class and learn without the added burden of hunger. This close collaboration between WFP and the GOB ensured sustainable host-country ownership of a national school meals program.



McGovern-Dole donated the roofing materials for school buildings in Nicaragua, while the PTA collected wood to construct a school for the students (center, right). Previously, the school gathered underneath a tree (left).

*Spotlight on Nicaragua: Community Involvement as a Cornerstone of Sustaining School Meals*

Sustained community involvement with the schools is one indicator of parental and community commitment to education and the likelihood a school meals program will stay in effect. USDA awarded Project Concern International (PCI) with over \$8 million in FY 2013 to implement a three-year McGovern-Dole project in Nicaragua. PCI's project, which ended in FY 2015, worked in eleven municipalities across

Nicaragua to improve school literacy, health, and nutrition-related practices within schools. PCI engaged with local communities and school families to establish and build the capacity of over 265 PTAs. PTA members received training on the importance of establishing partnerships between parents and the school administration officials to ensure the sustainability of school meals. PCI also worked closely with parents and teachers to encourage them to contribute their time, labor, funds, or other supplies to improve basic school infrastructure. During the life of



this project, more than 73,000 children attending over 1,010 pre- and primary schools participated in the program. Moreover, PCI implemented this project in close collaboration with the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education's Integrated School Nutrition program. This involvement at the national level with the Government of Nicaragua and the local level of the community are both key aspects of Nicaragua's ongoing commitment to establishing host-country ownership and the current sustainability of school meals in the country.

### C. Increased School Attendance

Children fail to attend school for a variety of reasons: illness, chores, natural disasters, lack of finances, cultural preferences toward older or male children, transportation hurdles, seasonal labor (for boys), early marriage or pregnancy (for girls), and others. These issues vary across communities and cultures. Exacerbating factors include challenges to recording and analyzing attendance rates in many of the countries where McGovern-Dole works. Teachers and schools lack incentive to accurately record attendance rates in some cases because low attendance is perceived to reflect poorly on them, so it is not rare to encounter inflated or incomplete school-level attendance data. Even accurate attendance data require significant time to compile and analyze. By definition, attendance can only be calculated over a period of time, and thus proper analysis requires a large data set reflecting a significant number of students over a period of time. Since attendance data are often only available in handwritten daily logs, compiling these data for analysis can also require a hefty investment. McGovern-Dole works with governments, schools, and partners to mitigate these challenges and to ensure greater uniformity in reporting.

A number of studies, including one that isolated school meals from the effects of income and other factors provide strong evidence that school meals positively affect school enrollment and attendance rates, especially for girls.<sup>16,17,18</sup>

School meals and take-home rations encourage, and contribute to students' increased school attendance and enrollment in a positive manner. School meals are an "economic" incentive for students to attend school; parents are more likely to allow their children to go to school when the family receives a net opportunity gain from children receiving food at school or through take-home rations.<sup>19</sup> School meals may also result in lower dropout rates, and improve household food security.<sup>20,21,22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> World Food Programme, "The Impact of Feeding Children in School: Evidence from Bangladesh," 2005, <http://www.wfp.org/content/impact-feeding-children-school-evidence-bangladesh>

<sup>17</sup> Ty M. Lawson, "Impact of School Feeding Programs on Educational, Nutritional, and Agricultural Development Goals: A Systematic Review of Literature," A PLAN B PAPER, 2012, Submitted to Michigan State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE, Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics.

<sup>18</sup> Patrick Lubega Korugyendo and Todd Benson, "Food-for-Education programs: Lessons for Uganda," International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Policy Note No. 13, 2011, hereafter referred to as Korugyendo and Benson, "Food-for-Education programs," IFPRI Policy Note No. 13, 2011.

<sup>19</sup> Korugyendo and Benson, "Food-for-Education programs," IFPRI Policy Note No. 13, 2011.

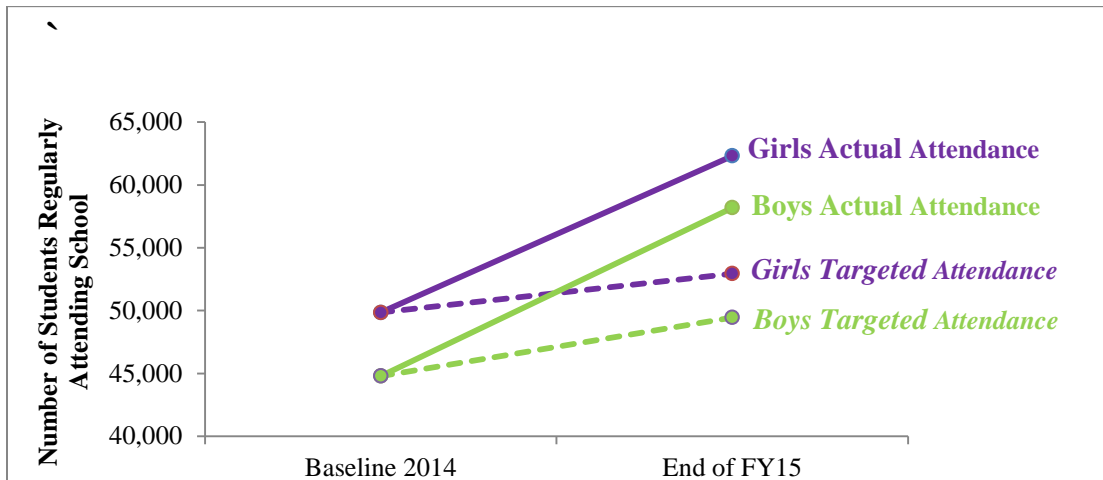
<sup>20</sup> Korugyendo and Benson, "Food-for-Education programs," IFPRI Policy Note No. 13, 2011.

<sup>21</sup> Roy I. Millerand & William D. Drake, "School Feeding: Effects on Enrollment, Attendance, and Drop-out in Sri Lanka," USAID, 1983.

<sup>22</sup> Fritzie Rodriguez, "School Feeding Programs for Filipino Kids," Rappler, January 31, 2014, updated September 1, 2015, <http://www.rappler.com/move-ph/issues/hunger/49213-school-feeding-programs-filipino-kids>

McGovern-Dole provides guidance to implementing partners to collect and report on their project’s impact on attendance. McGovern-Dole requires all implementers to report on a standard indicator entitled “number of students regularly (80 percent of the time) attending USDA supported classrooms/schools.”<sup>23</sup> During FY 2015, for example, in a WFP Bangladesh school meals program, the number of students who regularly attended USDA supported schools (80 percent of the time) increased from the initial target of 102,400 to 120,502 students, as demonstrated in the graph below.

**Figure 3: Example of Increased Student Attendance (WFP Bangladesh)**



#### D. Improving Food Security through School Meals Programs

McGovern-Dole is not just a direct feeding program; it also implements activities that improve food security for vulnerable infants, children, mothers, and families. In addition to providing school meals, McGovern-Dole also provides take-home rations to families whose children are enrolled in school, trains food preparers on nutrition and food safety, builds or rehabilitates infrastructure, such as hand-washing stations and latrines to promote food safety, and trains teachers and parents on nutrition and related topics like health and hygiene.



In Atsbi Womberta, Ethiopia, children at Endamino Primary School enjoy a plate of Corn Soya Blend from WFP.

#### *Ethiopia: Strengthening Food Security through School Meals during a Drought*

During 2013 to 2015, a McGovern-Dole project run by WFP provided daily school meals to approximately 263,000 students in 590 primary schools in the Afar and Somali regions of Ethiopia, two of the most food-deficit areas in the

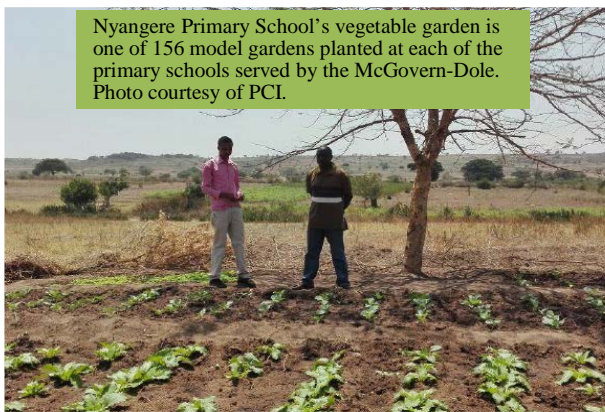
<sup>23</sup> USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, “Food for Progress and McGovern-Dole Indicators and Definitions,” Food Assistance Division, Office of Capacity Building and Development, 2016, [https://www.fas.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2016-10/indicator\\_handbook\\_updated\\_august\\_2016\\_final\\_8-16-16.pdf](https://www.fas.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2016-10/indicator_handbook_updated_august_2016_final_8-16-16.pdf), hereafter referred to as USDA, “Indicators and Definitions,” 2016.

country. This multi-year program is valued at \$26.5 million and has distributed 12,450 MT of corn-soy blend (CSB) as a nutritious mid-morning porridge at school, and 2,630 MT of vegetable oil as a monthly take-home ration for female students. Beginning in 2014, three consecutive annual harvests failed, as a result of the worst drought in Ethiopia for 50 years.<sup>24</sup> Ethiopia's robust social safety nets, including school meals, are credited for helping avert famine during this time. The ability of McGovern-Dole to support food security during this persistent drought demonstrated the role McGovern-Dole plays for the country's primary-school aged children. In recent years, with food as an incentive to stay in school, the Endamino School achieved a zero percent dropout rate and an enrollment that is 53 percent female.

*Tanzania: "I Can Accomplish My Dreams" - How School Meals Directly Impact Students' Concentration in School*

In northwest Tanzania, PCI has been implementing a three-year McGovern-Dole project valued at \$17.5 million from FY 2013 funds. The project has benefited approximately 95,000 students in 156 primary schools in the remote Mara Region, which borders Lake Victoria. It is a region of many challenges including: high malnutrition, high Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and malaria rates; susceptibility to drought; lack of basic infrastructure; and high poverty rates. Primary school districts in the Mara Region are often ranked among the lowest nationally, based on national primary school completion exam scores. This poor academic performance is no surprise given that students in the area without McGovern-Dole support often go an entire day without a single meal. Under McGovern-Dole, PCI is able to provide a daily meal of U.S.-donated rice, pinto beans, and sunflower seed oil, supplemented by produce contributed by local farmer groups, which PCI has connected to the primary schools.

*"McGovern-Dole and PCI helped me to accomplish my dreams and now I will reach my goals as I know how to read and write."*  
 -Wakuru Mrema, 15 years old



To supplement the U.S.-donated commodities with local vegetables, the McGovern-Dole schools have planted model vegetable gardens in all 156 primary schools. PCI trained agriculture teachers to use the model gardens to teach students about nutrition and improved agricultural practices, such as manure application and proper seed spacing. Schools have used the harvests of African eggplants, Ethiopian mustard, cowpeas, okra, and amaranth to supplement daily school meals.

<sup>24</sup> Al Jazeera News, "Drought Leaves 6 Million Ethiopian Children Hungry," April 8, 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/04/drought-leaves-6-million-ethiopian-children-hungry-160408134745829.html>

## E. School Meals and Literacy Activities Can Transform Lives - Improving Literacy Using School Meals

*Cambodia: “I like to study, especially mathematics... I want to go to college someday and get a job.” How Daily Hot Breakfasts Support Universal Access to Primary Education*



*“The school breakfast is very delicious. It’s better than the food I eat at home.” - Muon Malai*  
(Photo courtesy of WFP/ Bushra Rahman)

Muon Malai has a profound desire to learn, one of the main reasons she attends school regularly. The 11-year old recently graduated to grade six in Tbeng Primary School. She resides in Theng village with her parents and two older brothers. Her mother, a rice farmer, is the main breadwinner of the family and takes care of the family, including her disabled father.

Besides her enjoyment of learning, the hot breakfast every morning encourages Malai’s family to allow her to attend school regularly. The school meal includes fortified rice, fortified vegetable oil, and iodized salt. The food basket also includes yellow split peas and canned fish, both important protein sources. Schools in her village complement the meal with locally-contributed vegetables, spices, and herbs that are either purchased from local markets or home-grown. Her hot breakfast is the meal she likes the most, as her daily meal at home consists of only rice and a few vegetables, with a small amount of dried fish once a week.

This daily breakfast is a key component helping to keep thousands of underprivileged children in Cambodia attending school regularly. Over the past few years, WFP has been supporting the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to provide a daily hot breakfast through its School Feeding Program to some 290,000 school children located in highly food insecure areas. The School Feeding Program has been instrumental in supporting the RGC’s effort to ensure universal access to primary education and promote increased enrollment, retention, and graduation. According to its stated goals, the RGC aims to establish, manage, and fund a nationally-owned school meals program by 2021.

*Nepal: “I Love to Study” - A Quality Education for All, Including Girls*

Boredom and a fear of not knowing the right answers when called upon pervaded students at the Kalika Bhagwati primary school in Bajhang, a remote mountain district in far western Nepal. The teaching method previously used at the school consisted of rote memorization, with little emphasis on ensuring the students truly understood the material or practiced how to learn. Public schools in Nepal, both rural and urban, are often poorly equipped and the student-teacher ratio of 37 to 1 deprives students of individual attention. On average, only 80 percent of students receive textbooks within the second week of the academic year, and the percentage is much

lower in remote areas.<sup>25</sup> Millions of children were falling behind in their studies due to the absence of a supportive learning environment.

The introduction of the laptop program by Open Learning Exchange Nepal (OLE Nepal) and WFP completely changed the teaching and learning landscape at this school. The laptops, loaded with a grade-specific interactive digital learning program, allow children to learn at their own pace, and give them the opportunity to examine the same problem through multiple lenses.

Interventions like OLE Nepal's laptop program give students a chance to explore and develop their capacities and succeed academically. The added benefit of the program is the active engagement of teachers and parents through training and outreach activities, encouraging overall community buy-in. During this three-year McGovern-Dole project WFP plans to deploy 1,500 specialized laptops, establish digital libraries benefiting 375,000 students, and train 3,600 teachers and 1,200 school administrators on the use of digital instructional materials.

*"I love to study Nepali on the laptop. It helps me identify letters and words easily. I can also listen and learn the sentences"-*

Manisha Kumari, Student at Tyandi Primary School in Bajhang, Nepal



*"E-Paati has helped me read poems in right tunes. I am able to understand what the poems mean." - Maya Bohora (Photo and text: courtesy of OLE)*

The results of multiple impact surveys conducted by OLE Nepal indicate the program has led to improved learning for both male and female students, increased student interest and self-pacing, and created a more conducive and equitable learning environment, all of which have increased school attendance rates. Baseline and end line surveys conducted in project schools show improved progress in science among students from grades two through five over a year-long period. The improvement in scores across grades ranged between 14-17 percent. Also important, both male and female students have benefited nearly equally from this intervention.

<sup>25</sup> According to data provided by the Government of Nepal, found in the publication Government of Nepal, Ministry of Education, "Nepal Education in Figures 2015 At-A-Glance," Monitoring, Evaluation and Supervision Division, [http://pustakalaya.org/eserv.php?pid=Pustakalaya:7353&dsID=MOENepal2072BS\\_NepalEducationInFigures2015.pdf](http://pustakalaya.org/eserv.php?pid=Pustakalaya:7353&dsID=MOENepal2072BS_NepalEducationInFigures2015.pdf)

## F. Incentivizing Girls' Education through School Meals

McGovern-Dole's emphasis on educating girls is a legislative mandate. Research shows that investing in girls' education delivers concrete, far-reaching economic and social benefits. An educated girl is more likely to have higher earning potential than her non-educated peers, and can contribute to increasing the overall income in her community.<sup>26</sup> Globally, approximately 31 million primary school-aged girls are not in school; about 17 million of these girls have never entered school,<sup>27</sup> and two-thirds of the world's 774 million illiterate people are female.<sup>28</sup> Numerous studies suggest that educating women and girls is the single most effective strategy to ensure the wellbeing and health of children and the long-term success of developing country economies.<sup>29</sup> Dire social consequences occur when girls are not educated, including high birth rates, high maternal and infant mortality, poor health and nutrition outcomes, low wages, reduced labor force participation, and individual and societal instability.<sup>30</sup>

McGovern-Dole projects that encourage girls to attend and stay in school include: daily school meals to address hunger and poor nutrition; take-home rations and food scholarships to reward attendance or educational attainment; female teacher training and the placement of women in positions of leadership in school administrations; capacity building of student mother associations to advocate for girls' education; provision of employment and savings opportunities for mothers; improved sanitation, such as separate gender-specific latrines and menstrual cycle management support; provision of safe transport to school; and teacher, community member, and school staff training in gender-sensitive pedagogy, gender equity, and mentorship.

*Nepal: "I go to school to get an education so that when I grow up I can be a teacher" - How the Midday Meal Serves as an Incentive for Girls to Attend School*

Seven-year-old Smriti walks an hour to get to school every day. Poverty and food insecurity are widespread in Smriti's district of Dailekh, as a result of high food prices and a series of natural disasters. Vulnerable families are forced to skip meals or sell their assets in order to buy food. The district literacy rate, at 52 percent, is far below the overall national rate of 81 percent. Very often, parents struggle to feed their children or send them to school at all.

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<sup>26</sup> Jo Bourne, "Why Educating Girls Makes Economic Sense," Global Partnership for Education, March 6, 2014, <http://www.globalpartnership.org/blog/why-educating-girls-makes-economic-sense>; Ambassador Melanne Vermeer, "Educating Women and Girls in the Developing World: Conversation with Ambassador Melanne Vermeer," The Brookings Institute, July 21, 2009, <https://www.brookings.edu/events/educating-women-and-girls-in-the-developing-world-a-conversation-with-ambassador-melanne-vermeer>, hereafter referred to as Ambassador Melanne Vermeer, "Educating Women and Girls in the Developing World," July 21, 2009.

<sup>27</sup> UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report, "Fact Sheet: Girls' Education – The Facts," October 2013, <http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/girls%E2%80%99-education-%E2%80%93-facts> hereafter referred to as UNESCO, "Girls' Education – The Facts," October 2013.

<sup>28</sup> UNESCO, "Girls' Education – The Facts," October 2013.

<sup>29</sup> Educating Girls Matters, "The Challenge Today," 2017, <http://www.educatinggirlsmatters.org/challenge.html>; UNICEF, "Girls' Education and Gender Equality," 2017, [https://www.unicef.org/education/bege\\_70640.html](https://www.unicef.org/education/bege_70640.html); The World Bank, "Girls' Education," 2017, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/girlseducation>; Ambassador Melanne Vermeer, "Educating Women and Girls in the Developing World," July 21, 2009.

<sup>30</sup> UNESCO Education for All Global Monitoring Report, "Education Counts Towards the Millennium Development Goals," 2011.; UNICEF, "The Investment Case for Education and Equity," January 2015, [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_78727.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_78727.html)

In order to combat food insecurity and low literacy rates, WFP has supported the Government of Nepal (GON) in launching the National School Meals Program. With the support of McGovern-Dole, the program helps struggling families by providing “*haluwa*,” a nutritious Nepalese dish made of fortified cereals using U.S.-donated CSB and fortified vegetable oil, to over 190,000



For lunch, seven-year-old Smriti eats *haluwa*, a nutritious dish made of fortified corn-soy blend plus and vegetable oil donated by USDA. Photo courtesy of WFP.

school children across the country each day. The program also reinforces good health and nutrition practices by including training for girls, school teachers, parents, and community members on food safety and nutrition, with a focus on locally available nutritious foods; health; water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH).

The program places a special focus on incentivizing girls, since many of them struggle to combine their studies with the burden of household responsibilities. Educating children, particularly girls,

provides a major step towards ensuring inclusive education, reducing poverty and discrimination, and improving food security.

## G. Enhancing Nutrition: Programs Incorporate Diverse and Fortified Foods

McGovern-Dole’s authorizing legislation directs USDA to provide nutritious meals to preschool students and children less than 5 years of age, pregnant women, and nursing mothers. Nutrition and early childhood development interventions for pregnant women and nursing mothers and children under two years old are critical to preventing long-term and intergenerational complications of malnutrition because this period, known as the “1000 days,” is the time when the most rapid and important physical and cognitive development takes place. Proper nutrition and nurturing care support early childhood development during this time, establishing the foundations of health and wellbeing over the lifetime.

Often the school meal is the only daily meal for the poorest of children, and thus, if irreparable damage has not occurred in the “1000 days”, can play a vital role in tackling nutritional deficiencies that can create irreversible damage to a child’s growth and development.<sup>31</sup> Through providing school meals to preschool students in Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers and schools, McGovern-Dole is helping both pre-and primary-school students receive the opportunity to participate in age-appropriate instruction. Recognizing the important role of supporting ECD, McGovern-Dole is moving towards collecting grade-level differentiated data.

<sup>31</sup> World Food Programme, “School Meals,” 2017, <http://www.wfp.org/school-meals>

*Malawi: “Shalia was Getting Sick Quite Often...but Now She is Very Strong” - Promoting Primary School Readiness through Improved Child Nutrition*

In FY 2015, USDA funded the third year of a three-year agreement with the WFP, using \$21 million from FY 2013 funds and providing WFP with 11,470 MT of CSB.

With McGovern-Dole support, WFP provides meals and promotes teacher attendance at ECD centers and primary schools for over 681,450 children. These centers aim to increase age-appropriate enrollment in primary schools, promote children’s readiness for



Shalia (center) eating porridge at a McGovern-Dole supported ECD center. Photo courtesy of WFP.

primary school education, and improve nutritional status. Shalia Stewart is one student who is benefitting from a McGovern-Dole-supported ECD. Like the 178 other children accessing Nsekera Early Childhood Development Center in Chikwawa district, she eats a meal of CSB, a fortified blended food, provided through McGovern-Dole. Her mother noted the significant impact this support had on her child’s health, saying: “Shalia was getting sick quite often before we brought her to the ECD center, but now she is very strong. I’m amazed that Shalia has become so active and interacts easily with her friends, unlike other children who don’t come to the ECD.”

In addition to providing meals and promoting teacher attendance, McGovern-Dole provides capacity building to teachers, PTAs, school management, administrators, and food associations. These efforts focus on good nutrition and health habits, hygiene and sanitation, commodity management, food preparation and management, and financial management. WFP has also worked with the Government of Malawi to assist policy makers at national levels to promote health and nutrition in schools through the development of Malawi’s National Health and Nutrition Policy. WFP has also supported the participation of Malawian education officials in a learning and knowledge exchange at the annual Global Child Nutrition Forum, where they had the opportunity to learn about school meals best practices and evidence.

### **Micronutrient-Fortified Food Aid Products Pilot Program**

Since FY 2012, USDA has implemented the Micronutrient-Fortified Food Aid Products Pilot (MFFAPP) in five developing countries. MFFAPP tests the delivery and use of vitamin and mineral-enriched food in direct feeding programs to address nutrient deficiencies in specific populations served by McGovern-Dole (including school-aged children, children under five years of age, pregnant and lactating women, and infants). All of the fortified food products being tested were developed in the United States using domestically-grown commodities and U.S.-based manufacturers. Each MFFAPP project evaluates the fortified food assistance product for cost-effectiveness, nutritional value, and quality assurance. USDA works cooperatively with



USAID to add new food products that meet the nutritional needs of intended food aid recipients to the official food aid commodity list.

As depicted in the table below, USDA currently has MFFAPP agreements with two program recipient organizations in two countries, Cambodia and Tanzania.

Country/Program Recipient	Product	Completion Date	Results
Cambodia/ PATH – Program for Appropriate Technology in Health	Fortified milled rice <i>(Ultra-Rice)</i>	June 2014 (analysis of results on-going)	Consumption of the product led to an improvement in zinc and Vitamin A, a decrease in diarrhea, and no significant change in anemia (the latter, due to greater than expected levels of quality iron in test subject diets). The fortified rice was highly accepted compared to milled rice due to an improved grain appearance that more closely mimics traditional rice. The results from the Cambodia project are currently being studied and undergoing additional analysis.
Tanzania/Kansas State University	Three Fortified Blended Foods (FBF): sorghum-soybean, sorghum-cowpea and corn-soy blends	February 2017	The initial results from the Tanzania project will be collected in spring 2017.

Riceland Foods and Heartland Harvest became the first fortified rice producers in the U.S, as fortified rice kernels were previously manufactured overseas. USDA continuously seeks similar public-private partnerships to develop new fortified products in collaboration with U.S. agricultural interests.

*Cambodia: Improving Nutrition by Inclusion of Fortified Milled Rice in School Meals*

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), rice fortification is a cost-effective and efficient way to address micronutrient deficiencies and malnutrition in countries with high rice consumption.<sup>32</sup> As the dominant staple food crop of approximately half of the world population, mostly concentrated in developing countries, rice is an ideal vehicle to improve micronutrient status without requiring consumers to change their purchasing or cooking habits.

<sup>32</sup> J. Ashong et al., “Fortification of Rice with Vitamins and Minerals for Addressing Micronutrient Malnutrition (Protocol)”. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, Issue 6, 2012.

In FY 2012, USDA funded a three-year, \$2.8 million grant to Program for Appropriate Technology Health (PATH) and WFP to develop and field test an improved fortified milled rice kernel containing high levels of key micronutrients that are commonly lacking in developing country diets. The micronutrient fortification of these products was conducted in collaboration with U.S. producers and cooperators, using domestically grown commodities.

Goals for the fortified rice kernels included widening nutritional content, retaining more nutrients, and reducing production cost. Over a seven-month period, PATH developed and field-tested fortified rice for use in a McGovern-Dole project in Cambodia with school aged children 7-14 years old. By leveraging a public-private partnership, valued at over \$600,000, with Abbott Pharmaceuticals, PATH was able to generate a number of micronutrient formulation options for the improved grains used during early production runs without increasing costs to USDA. Eight specific micronutrients were included in the rice-premix. The final fortified rice mix that PATH developed was blended with traditional domestically grown rice so that the food preparers did not have to modify traditional rice cooking techniques.



Results of the trial showed reduced illnesses rates, improved cognitive scores, and significant improvements in Vitamin A and zinc status in test subjects. Cambodian students accepted the PATH's fortified rice at a high rate due to an improved grain appearance that more closely mimicked traditional rice. PATH also improved kernel strength, which prevented breakage and further helped with grain acceptance.

Thanks to this research in 2014, USDA added "fortified milled rice" to the U.S. Government commodity master list for use in U.S. food assistance programs. Working with Arkansas-based Riceland Foods and Illinois-based Heartland Harvest on producing the fortified rice kernels, USDA released the first successful solicitation for 4,110 MT of fortified rice in FY 2015. WFP used this product in the 2015 school year in Cambodia, feeding it to over 100,000 beneficiaries.

### **Evaluating and Monitoring McGovern-Dole**

USDA is committed to using data from impact studies and empirical evidence to strengthen the current school meals program design, funding, and implementation. In October 2014, USDA began the process of developing a learning agenda for McGovern-Dole to address knowledge and research gaps related to school meals programs. During the course of FY 2015, USDA convened two fora of technical experts, researchers, and stakeholders to help identify the state of research and evidence gaps in education, health, and nutrition. All of the input received, along with systematic literature reviews, was incorporated into the development of a final learning agenda that offers a set of strategic questions to inform McGovern-Dole's future evaluations and research.

The findings from these sessions confirmed a number of widely-held principles, but also demonstrated where USDA needs a stronger evidence base. In general, the learning agenda development process revealed that school meals programs have larger impacts in areas with low school participation (enrollment and attendance) and on children with greater initial malnutrition. Mixed evidence demonstrated the extent to which school meals improved performance on math and literacy tests, but data demonstrated that, depending on the type of food provided, the size of the food rations, and program duration, school meals can improve cognitive development. The project impacts may also be higher when they include complementary activities to improve schools or child health.

The McGovern-Dole learning agenda development process also found that many studies on school meals and related topics suffer from methodological shortcomings that limit the quality of their contributions. Because of this finding, USDA has improved its support for more rigorous data collection and reporting on standard and custom performance indicators, and increased program monitoring and evaluation activities. USDA has also initiated a \$1.2 million baseline study as part of an impact evaluation in Mozambique, using a randomized control methodology.

To measure achievement of its legislated mandates, the McGovern-Dole staff began implementing standard monitoring and evaluation practices in 2012. USDA has dedicated staff members qualified in monitoring and evaluation working with McGovern-Dole implementers to effectively use standard performance measures and to adhere to the FAS Food Assistance Division's monitoring and evaluation policy. USDA publishes Guidance on Food Aid Program Standard Indicators<sup>33</sup> that includes definitions and measurement notes for its standard indicators, which allow for the data consistency and comparability across projects in different national contexts. Project activities are measured against both standard and custom (project-specific) indicators that appropriately reflect the efficacy of those activities. Baseline, midterm, and final results are used to track each project's progress towards achieving McGovern-Dole targets and strategic objectives, as well as to provide lessons learned throughout the life of the project.

Each project is required to submit formal evaluation plans and performance monitoring plans. Program Participants are required to conduct independent, third-party project evaluations. The results framework protocols ensure that decision-making on program funding is driven by the evidence base on school meals, and not by anecdotal evidence, which allows for improved management of McGovern-Dole over time.

The USDA approach is grounded in Results Oriented Management (ROM), and uses a results framework comprised of program objectives that are hierarchically mapped (see Appendix VIII). Every project activity must be linked to the achievement of a result. McGovern-Dole has two strategic objectives, both grounded in its legislation: Improved Literacy of School-Age Children and Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices. Proposals selected for McGovern-Dole funding must demonstrate, in their logic and program design, that activities are appropriate for the country context and contribute to these two strategic objectives.

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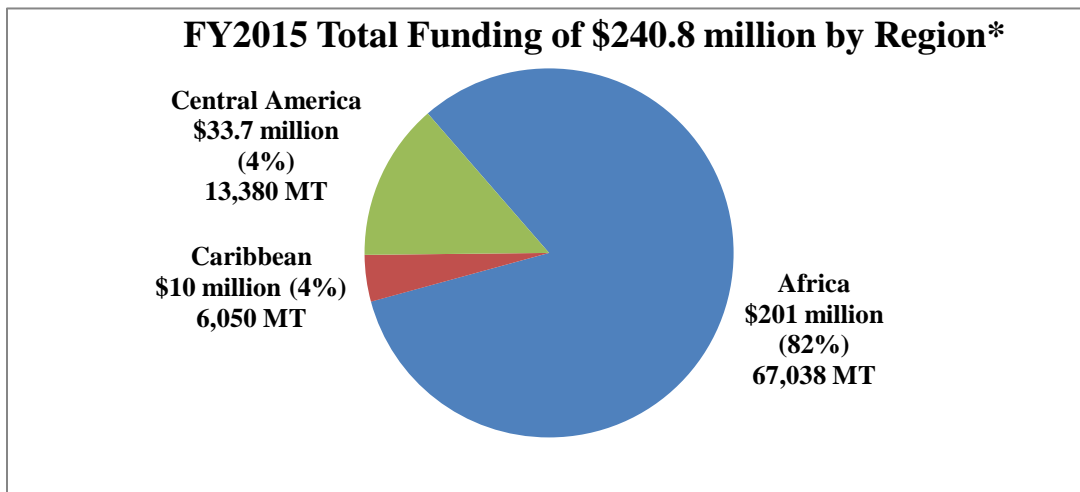
<sup>33</sup> USDA, "Indicators and Definitions," 2016.

Another important aspect of the McGovern-Dole Results Framework is the set of foundational results focused on strengthening local government and community capacity and engagement. Increased engagement of local organizations and community groups, and increased government support, are critical foundational results that each McGovern-Dole project must achieve to enhance sustainability.

## II. Specifics on FY 2015 McGovern-Dole Projects

In FY 2015, McGovern-Dole funded new projects that benefitted 2.9 million people in nine developing countries. These nine countries included Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone in Africa, and Haiti and Honduras in Latin America/Caribbean. The implementing partners include, Nascent Solutions, WFP, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, and Planet Aid International.

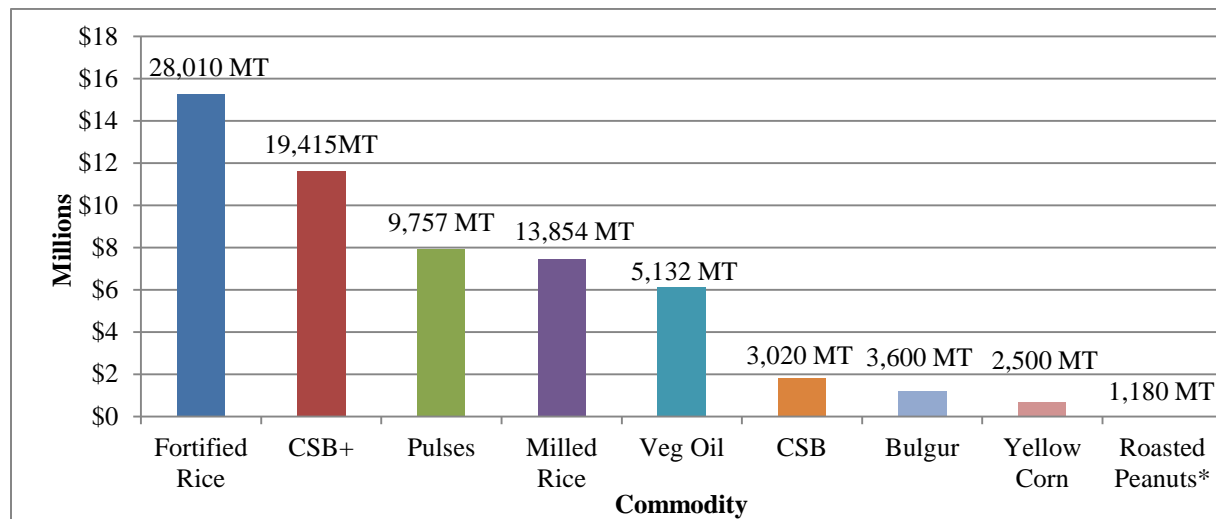
**Figure 4: The majority of the FY 2015 programs were allocated in Africa to target some of the world's poorest children**



\*The graph displays the quantity of commodities, which is included in the value of McGovern-Dole funding, along with financial assistance. Detailed information on recipient countries, implementing organizations, funding levels, program participants, and donated commodities in FY 2015 is provided in Appendix I.

**Figure 5: Commodities committed for FY 2015 agreements**

Fortified Blended Foods, such as Fortified Rice and Corn Soy Blend Plus (CSB+), comprised the majority of the commodities.



\*The value of roasted peanuts is noted at \$0 because these commodities were donated by USDA to WFP Haiti School Meals Program.

### Inter-Agency Coordination

#### *USAID and USDA Memorandum of Understanding*

USDA routinely consults with USAID on McGovern-Dole management, drawing on U.S. Government interagency technical capacity. On May 2, 2014, USDA-FAS and USAID’s Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to leverage each agency’s respective strengths, experience, investments, and resources in order to facilitate literacy, school attendance, nutrition, and health for school children. The MOU improves collaboration between McGovern-Dole projects and USAID’s basic education activities, where feasible and appropriate, by coordinating projects and exchanging technical assistance combining USDA’s contributing experience in school meals and USAID’s contributing experience in basic education in an effort to ensure that programming is well-coordinated and complementary.

In FY 2015, USDA and USAID continued to strengthen this collaboration. First, the working group formed under the MOU identified a set of sixteen countries in which USDA currently has active school meals and USAID has early grade reading projects in collaborative geographic regions. USDA and USAID sent a joint cable to all FAS overseas posts and USAID missions to send a consistent message about the goals for coordination around implementation, monitoring and evaluation, sustainability, and communications.



**Map: Common Countries where USDA McGovern-Dole and USAID Implement and Coordinate School Meals and Early Grade Reading Programs**

*Guatemala and Mozambique: Whole of Government Collaboration*

In an effort to coordinate with U.S. Government projects in Guatemala, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) signed a Letter of Understanding on October 1, 2015 between USDA’s “Learning for Life” project and USAID’s “Read and Learn” project. USDA provides the commodities for the school meals, which include CSB, milled rice, pinto beans, yellow corn and, fortified vegetable oil. CRS utilizes USAID-funded curricula in local languages, Early Grade Reading Assessment tests, and literacy activities. Under this unique program a total of 31,083 children are beneficiaries. In Mozambique, USDA and USAID worked together to develop a set of shared indicators for early-grade reading and literacy that will be assessed as part of a USDA-funded impact evaluation.



Peace Corps Volunteer Charles Besnard from Massachusetts hands out nutrient-rich meals to preschoolers.

*Burkina Faso: McGovern-Dole and Peace Corps Volunteers Work Together to Provide Preschool Meals and Education*

In partnership with CRS, McGovern-Dole provides school meals and supports education activities in 884 primary schools and 53 preschools, or “bissongos,” in a four-year agreement valued at \$21.6 million. With the support of McGovern-Dole, Beog Biiga (known in English as “Tomorrow’s Child”), CRS is working with locally-placed U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers in the Bam and Sanmatenga

provinces to establish and support local bissongos, preschool facilities for children ages 3 to 5.

At each bissongo, preschool students receive a daily meal of fortified porridge, after washing their hands under the supervision of trained caregivers.

With the support of the “Tomorrow’s Child” program, bissongos offer children the opportunity to learn how to behave in class. Caregivers give them a head in start learning basic language and counting skills, along with time for drawing, music, and playing outside. Stimulating them in a creative and educational way, the preschool prepares the children for primary school.

## Appendix I: McGovern-Dole Projects Funded in FY 2015

Country	Program Recipient	Projected Beneficiaries <sup>34</sup>
Cameroon	Nascent Solutions	37,232
Cote d'Ivoire	World Food Program	750,000
Guinea-Bissau	World Food Program	173,400
Mali	Catholic Relief Services	385,000
Mozambique	Planet Aid International	325,000
Mozambique	World Vision Inc.	300,000
Rwanda	World Food Program	415,000
Sierra Leone	Catholic Relief Services	85,500
<b>Africa Total</b>		<b>2,471,132</b>
Haiti	World Food Program	176,700
<b>Caribbean Total</b>		<b>176,700</b>
Honduras	Catholic Relief Services	270,000
<b>Central America Total</b>		<b>270,000</b>
<b>WORLDWIDE TOTAL</b>		<b>2,917,832</b>

<sup>34</sup> This indicates estimated beneficiaries over the life of the programs; actuals are not currently available.

## Appendix II: Activities Complementary to McGovern-Dole FY 2015

Each McGovern-Dole project, in its program design, must demonstrate how its activities will make progress towards achieving the program's highest-level objectives. The two highest-level objectives sought by the McGovern-Dole Results Framework (see Appendix VII) are (1) *Improved Literacy of School-Age Children* and (2) *Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices*.

Each project activity must be linked to the achievement of intermediate results that ultimately lead to the highest-level objectives of the McGovern-Dole. *Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices* is an example of an intermediate result to achieve the strategic objective of Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices. An example of an intermediate result to achieve the strategic objective of Improved Literacy of School-Age Children is *Improved Quality of Literacy Instruction*.

The FY 2015 McGovern-Dole projects include the following complementary activities, listed under the two goals of Improved Literacy of School Aged Children and Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices:

### Improved Literacy of School-Age Children

- Implement professional development training and mentorship to improve the quality of teacher performances
- Train teachers in pedagogic skills and techniques
- Provide incentives to improve teacher attendance, e.g. improved housing and pay
- Institute teacher awards
- Provide better access for children and teachers to school supplies and materials
- Establish libraries, reading corners, and e-libraries (digital)
- Establish after-school literacy support programs
- Set up tutoring programs, (including peer-to-peer learning)
- Provide and improve traditional and digital literacy instructional materials and solar power capable laptops
- Provide training to increase skills and knowledge of school administrators
- Improve school infrastructure (rehabilitate and repair classrooms, desks, chairs, and boards)
- Raise awareness of the importance of education through outreach activities and media campaigns to increase community understanding of the benefits of education
- Facilitate partnerships and execute consultations to increase the capacity of government institutions
- Train government officials in monitoring schools and increasing motivation and performance standards



- Train local and regional officials and parents to advocate for increased budgetary support for school meals to increase government support for schools
- Form saving and lending groups to assist families with improved economic and cultural incentives for participation in education
- Develop partnerships with farmer groups to supply food to schools to set up community-economic pathways to support education
- Set up PTAs with training in consultations, reporting, and support for children
- Distribute take-home rations to increase family engagement in children's education

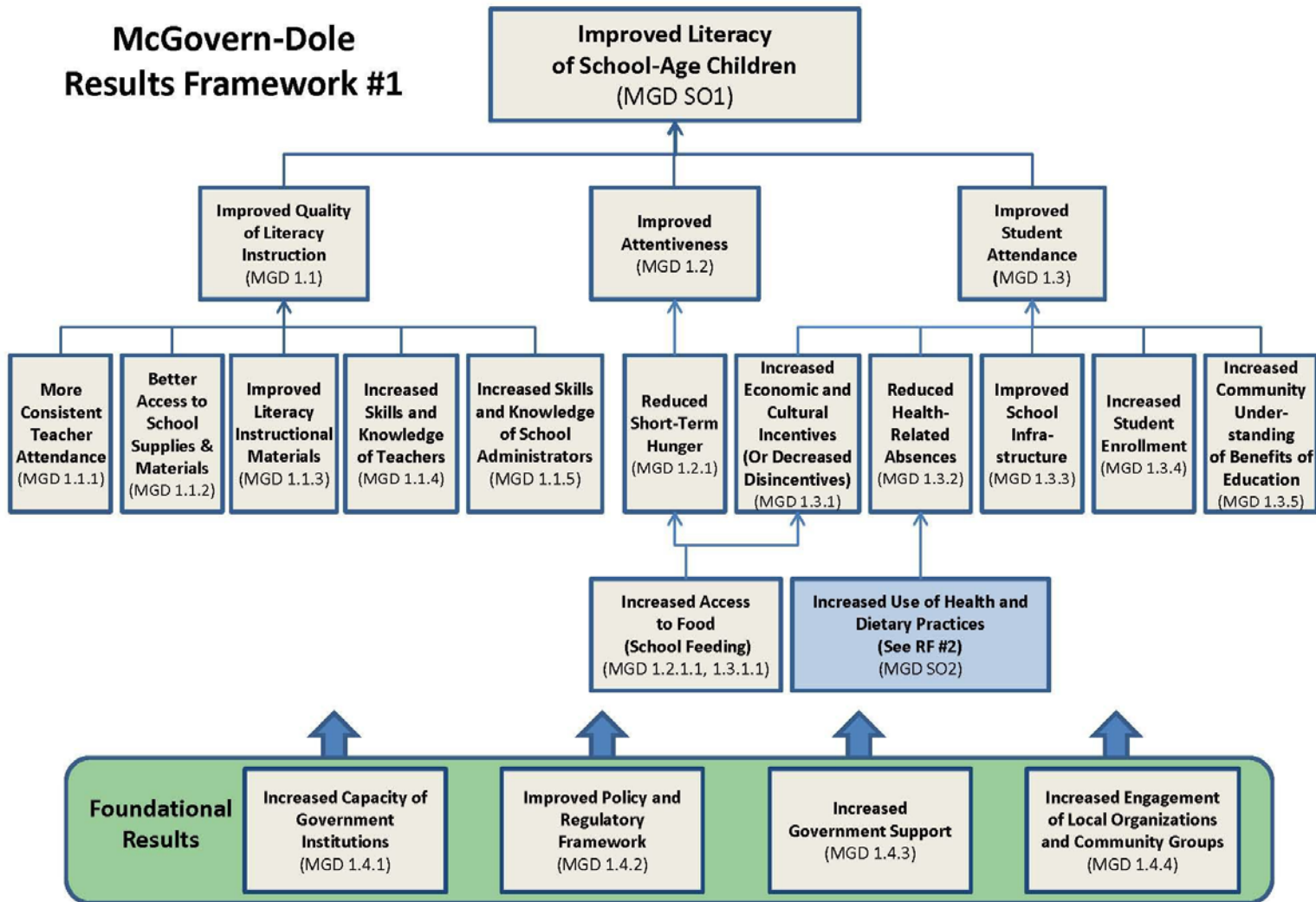
### **Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices**

- Train cooks, parents, administrators, kitchen staff, and teachers in good health and nutrition practices
- Train cooks and staff members in safe food preparation, commodity management, and food storage practices
- Provide training to staff and school administrators in child health and nutrition
- Increase access to clean water and sanitation services
- Improve water source facilities by building or rehabilitating wells and water stations
- Improve sanitary facilities by building or rehabilitating latrines and sanitation systems
- Increase access to preventive health interventions, including;
- Set up school site visits and monitoring inspections by health facility staff
- Provide children deworming medication(s) and supplemental nutrition
- Provide first-aid kits to schools
- Improve appropriate food-preparation and storage equipment
- Provide energy-saving stoves
- Build or rehabilitate canteens and storage rooms
- Increase engagement of local organizations and community groups to enhance the community-economic ties and promote school welfare
- Provide support for PTAs or similar school governance structures so they can support schools with infrastructure and supplies
- Form public-private partnerships in the local region to support school initiatives through financial and in-kind donations

**Appendix III: WFP School Meals Number of Beneficiaries by Region, All Donors**

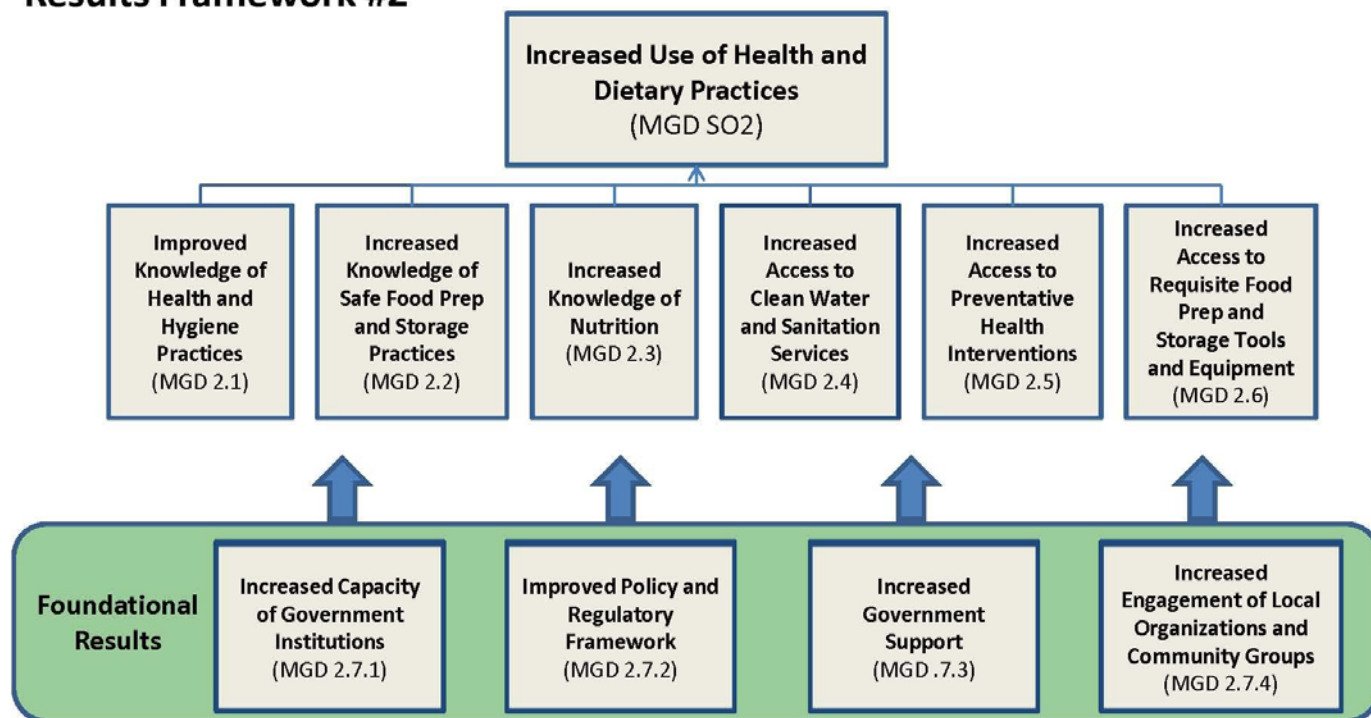
<b>Region</b>	<b>Countries</b>	<b>Beneficiaries (millions)</b>
West Africa	16	2.54
Southern Africa	8	3.33
Central and East Africa	8	2.54
Middle East/Central Asia/North Africa/Eastern Europe	12	4.21
Asia	23	2.64
Latin America and Caribbean	7	2.14
<b>Worldwide Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>17.4</b>

## Appendix IV: McGovern-Dole Results Frameworks



**A Note on Foundational Results:** These results can feed into one or more higher-level results. Causal relationships sometimes exist between foundational results.

## McGovern-Dole Results Framework #2



**A Note on Foundational Results:** These results can feed into one or more higher-level results. Causal relationships sometimes exist between foundational results.

## Appendix V: McGovern-Dole Proposal Review and Selection Criteria

McGovern-Dole grants provide U.S. agricultural commodities and cash resources to program recipients, who are non-profit charitable organizations, cooperatives, and international organizations, through a competitive grant approval process. Project proposals must include:

- A comprehensive plan detailing who the beneficiaries are and how the U.S. commodity will be provided to them
- A detailed description of complementary activities enhancing school meals, and improving education, nutrition and health
- Support from the local government, community, and/or national government
- A plan to sustain the benefits of the project after U.S. intervention has ceased;
- Evidence of previous experience carrying out a similar type of project, either in the country of donation or in another country with a comparable social, political, and economic environment
- An understanding of beneficiaries' needs and the corresponding social, economic, and political environment
- Evidence of program activities being tailored to meet McGovern-Dole's Results Framework strategic goals
- Evidence of measurable indicators that may be checked at baseline, midline, and at the end of the McGovern-Dole project, documenting progress towards meeting these strategic goals

Proposals are carefully evaluated and selected based on the following criteria:

- The implementing organization's prior experience with successfully administering school meals and/or food assistance projects
- Clarity of the intended project outcomes, objectives, and goals
- Clarity of connection between proposed activities and the intended results as outlined in the McGovern-Dole Results Frameworks
- The strength of the proposal's graduation and sustainability plan
- A demonstrated coordination with national, regional, and local governments, U.S. Government agencies, and national plans
- Commodity appropriateness and distribution plan

Commodities may be used in the country of donation in three ways:

- Direct distribution: As school snacks and meals and as take-home rations
- Food for work: The exchange of food rations or meals for work done by beneficiaries
- Value-added processing for distribution (barter): The commodity is processed to carry out the objectives of the food aid agreement (e.g. U.S.-donated wheat is processed into nutritious, high energy biscuits in Bangladesh for school meals projects)